

REMARKS

Claims 20-23 are pending in this application. New claims 22 and 23 have has been added.

An Embodiment of the Present Invention

One of the embodiments of the present invention is directed to a high temperature treating method for inflators for an air bag that includes the steps of charging the respective groups of inflators into thermal treating towers to subject the inflators to thermal treatment at a temperature at which the gas generating materials inside the inflators burn without melting those metals constituting said housing shells; and maintaining the temperature at least for about 3 times or more of a time required to thermally treat the inflators. Such a feature is disclosed in page 12, lines 21-27 of the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 20 and 21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukabori et al. (USP 5,849,062) in view of Morey (USP 4,362,276) and WO 99/16641 (based on U.S. Pat. Family member Fukabori et al. USP 6,878,352). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As stated by the Examiner in the Office Action, Fukabori '062 discloses a method for removal and treatment of gas generating airbag inflators from vehicle wherein the metallic material is recovered by melting.

Morey discloses a method for recovering and recycling metal and plastic from insulated wire.

WO 99/16641 discloses a method for recovering inflators by heating the inflator to a temperature not lower than the operating temperature of the chemical, and that the activation temperature of the chemical is normally from 300 to 600°C.

Therefore, even assuming that Fukabori '062, Morey, and WO 99/16641 can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, one skilled in the art, would at best modify the method disclosed by Fukabori '062 by recovering and recycling metal and plastic from insulated wire as taught by Morey, and heating the inflator to a temperature of not lower than 300 to 600°C as taught by WO 99/16641.

Applicants submit that Fukabori '062 in view of Morey (USP 4,362,276) and WO 99/16641 fails to disclose or suggest "maintaining the temperature at least for about 3 times or more of a time required to thermally treat the inflators," as recited in claim 20.

Claim 21, dependent on claim 20, is allowable at least for its dependency on claim 20.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

New Claim

Claims 22 and 23, dependent on claim 20, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 20.

A favorable determination by the Examiner and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

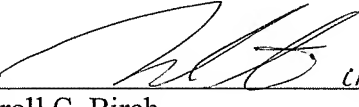
Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: June 8, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

for By  (reg # 40,417)
Terrell C. Birch
Registration No.: 19,382
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant